WORK OF THE BEAVER

Feats Performed by This Industrious Little Worker.

A CLEVER HOUSE BUILDER.

He Is Capable of Constructing a Dwelling as Large, Though Not So High, as a Small Haystack, and He Can Cut Down Big Trees With His Teeth.

Almost every one knows something about the beaver and that it builds dams and houses to dwell in, but very few people have seen beavers in their wild state. It is also a fact that the race of industrious little workers is rapidly disappearing. In the older districts beavers generally live in the banks of the streams they inhabit, and the sight of a beaver house is uncommon.

Where beavers do build houses, says Forest and Stream, the structures differ greatly in size, shape and location. Some are as large, though of course less high, than a small haystack; others are hardly more than six feet through at the base. They may stand either wholly on land or partly in the water and partly on the bank or wholly in the water.

They are never placed in very deep water, for a base must be built for the house to stand on reaching up to the surface, since the chamber inhabited by the occupants must be dry.

The shape of those houses on the shore approaches the conical. Those in the water are more irregular, sometimes only rounded, at others long and rather flat on top.

Within each house and connected with the water by a concealed passage through which the beavers pass to and fro is the chamber which is the animals' dwelling place.

It is large enough to contain seven or eight of them and high enough so that a beaver can conveniently sit up on his haunches. It is warm, dry and clean, for the beaver is extremely neat in all his habits.

The food of the beaver consists chiefly of the green bark of twigs and young limbs of various trees. Cottonwood bark is preferred; then comes willow, then alder, but the bark of almost any tree may be eaten.

I have known them to eat pine and white cedar. The beaver often cuts down trees of very considerable size to get at the smaller limbs, which they eat.

I have seen cottonwoods twenty inches in diameter so cut, and once on Vancouver island I found a cedar two and one-half feet through which they had gnawed down.

The work of cutting down a large tree is done by a single animal. I have seen the beaver engaged in the operation, which is as follows: The beaver sits up on his haunches facing the tree and with its fore paws resting against it. With its head turned on one side he cuts a groove above and then one below and bites out the chip, taking it off in almost the same way an axman would.

He thus saves himself the trouble of gnawing all the wood up into fine cuttings. When the tree is felled the whole community attack and cut up the tender limbs, carrying them away to the cache.

Unlike many of our gnawing animals, the beaver does not sleep through the winter. He remains active, often venturing abroad during the whole of the cold weather. He must, therefore, have food, and a large part of the summer and autumn is devoted to securing this food and depositing it in caches. This food consists of the limbs and twigs of the trees most preferred by the beaver.

They are cut from one and a half to three feet long, stripped of their leaves and smaller twigs, carried to the water and floated to the cache, where they are sunk. And here comes a very curious point.

These sticks are floated to the cache and are sunk by the beaver to the bottom of the water, where they remain without any apparent anchorage. They are not stuck in the mud of the bottom or held down by weights. If you lift one to the surface it will float, but you may move it about on the bottom without its rising.

I have myself tried this with sticks from which the bark has been eaten, but have never done so with the green, unpeeled limbs before the beavers had taken them into their houses. This matter to me is a very mysterious one, and I have never been able to get any hint as to how these sticks were sunk.

All through the winter the beavers visit these caches, carry the sticks to their houses, where they eat off the bark, returning the bare sticks to the water.

Sometimes it may happen that for some reason or other the cache may not contain enough to last the whole winter. In this case the beavers, if possible, get on land through some air hole or piece of open water and then forage among the timber. Occasionally a combination of scarcity and severe weather may oblige the colony to emigrate during the winter to some more favorable spot.

Courting Trouble.

"Look here," said the official, "there'll be trouble if your wife disregards us when we persistently tell her she must not pick the flowers."

"Then," replied Mr. H. Peck, for it was no other, "why ever do you persist?"—Judge.

Be prepared to answer for the single talent committed to your charge and take no thought for the rest.—St. Bernard of Chairvaux.

THE SEPARATOR.

Be Careful to Keep It Scrupulously Clean and Sanitary.

Probably no one thing connected with dairying is of more importance than keeping the utensils clean. The following rules should be carefully observed:

A cream separator should be thoroughly washed every time after using. A brush should be used on every part and piece, using 5 per cent. solution of borax or other good washing powder. Rinse in hot water, or steam if possible. They should then be left to dry while hot. Wiping with an ordinary clean cloth contaminates utensils with innumerable bacteria.

The bacterial contamination in milk is increased from three to five times by running it through a separator bowl which has been used and only flushed and left standing several hours. If only flushed while using, for several days, the contamination increases several times more, and such milk would be likely to be detrimental if fed to calves.

The use of a cream separator that is thoroughly washed reduces the number of bacteria in milk one-fifth to one-fourth.

Improper cleaning is detrimental to a separator on account of the rust that accumulates on dirty or damp places. This may shorten the life of the machine many months, depending on the degree of cleanliness employed.

Running milk through a dirty separator is similar to running it through a dirty strainer, with all of the filth of the previous milking left in it from 12 to 24 hours. The millions of undesirable bacteria from the dirt, manure and slime lodged in the separator bowl spoil all the milk, to a greater or lesser degree, that passes through the machine.

When properly used, a cream separator is a clarifier and to a certain extent a purifier, but if not kept clean it is a source of filth and contamination.

It is more important to follow these directions at this season of the year, although they are appropriate for all seasons. The warmer the weather, the more rapidly bacteria develop, and therefore the more rapidly milk and cream become damaged. It is important now because it is the farmer's busy season, and with the press of other work he is tempted to neglect the important matter of keeping his dairy utensils in perfect order.

Again, the creameries are every year becoming more and more particular as to the cream or milk which they purchase. The more particular they become, the better it is both for the creamery and for the farmer; and hence it stands every man in hand to be able to furnish cream or milk of the highest quality, which can be done only by taking special care of the utensils, and especially of the separator.

COOLING MILK.

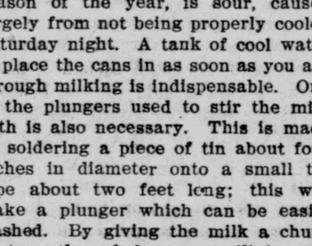
Keep the Cans in a Tank Filled with Cold Water.

A great deal of the milk brought to the creamery Monday morning, at this season of the year, is sour, caused largely from not being properly cooled Saturday night. A tank of cool water to place the cans in as soon as you are through milking is indispensable. One of the plungers used to stir the milk with is also necessary. This is made by soldering a piece of tin about four inches in diameter onto a small tin pipe about two feet long; this will make a plunger which can be easily washed. By giving the milk a churn or two, the whole mass will be agitated and thoroughly stirred, sending the milk in the center of the can to the outside and that at the outside to the center. If milk is clean, and the cans, strainers, pails and other utensils are properly cleaned and the whole mass of milk is properly cooled down immediately after milking, it will keep a long time.

LOW PLATFORM MILKING STOOL.

A Style of Device Which Some May Find to Their Liking.

Make the stool shown in the accompanying illustration of two boards 10



Milking Stool with Low Platform.

inches wide with a similar board across the top, over-reaching the sides at each end, 1 inch.

The floor of the stool, says the Prairie Farmer, is 16 inches long and wide enough for a pail. At the end is a 2x4 or 2x6 whichever is desired, and at the back the floor is nailed to the sides at the same height.

Are You?

There was a time when a bushel of corn worth 20 cents made five pounds of beef worth 25 cents. Now a bushel of corn worth 70 cents makes five pounds of beef worth 30 cents. Yet some men are still trying to make money out of the latter combination.

Feed Her Well.

Don't go back on the old cow just because feed is high. Remember we feed our cows to get them in trim for the next year's work, and if we let them run down this winter they will amount to but little next season.

NOT LIKE BISHOP SHE KNEW

Little One Compared Church Dignitary with His Prototype of the Chess Board.

A certain bishop, staying at a country house during an episcopal visit to the neighborhood, noticed that he was closely observed by a little maiden of the household, who kept a severely attentive eye upon him, apron and gaiters and all, until she found a quiet opportunity to inquire of him:

"Are you really a bishop?"

"Yes, of course, I am—really," answered the amused prelate.

"Well, I don't believe it," returned the critical and candid eight-year-old daughter of his chess-playing host, "'cos I've watched you ever since you came, and your head isn't split down the middle and you don't walk cornerways."—Fry's Magazine.

DO YOU KNOW GIBBS?

When you have asked Gibbs and some of the other neighbors in to meet your distinguished friend, Maj. Shoots, just returned from Manila; and when Gibbs, who is a slick talker, takes charge of the major and leads the conversation all evening, to the exclusion of you, and demonstrates to the major that he, Gibbs, is the only man in the crowd who knows the Philippines from Fastnet Rock or a rampart from a ramrod; and when he sides with the major against the rest of the company in every discussion, and patronizes you in his superior knowledge of history, geography, politics, surgery, sanitation and war—aren't you glad you invited Gibbs?—Newark (N. J.) News.

TOWERS.

The patient architect had just succeeded in getting Mrs. Drippingold to decide between the charms of renaissance, classic and Queen Anne for the plans of her magnificent new country house.

"The only details I ain't goin' to leave to your discretion," said the wealthy lady, "is the matter of towers. I want plenty of towers that folks can see for a long way off when they're ridin' by."

"But what kind of towers do you want?" inquired the unfortunate architect. "Norman, Gothic—"

Mrs. Drippingold closed the English novel of high life on which her soul had been feeding.

"Why, ancestral towers, of course."—Puck.

EMBARRASSING.

Clarence—I heah that the pwince of Wales never wears a pair of trowsers more than twice.

Percy—Is that so? But w-what does he do th-the rest of the t-time?

STRATEGY.

Rodrick—Great Scott! Has Bilkins lost his mind?

Van Albert—I don't think so; why?

Rodrick—Just look at the illumination in his house. He has had every gas jet burning all day long.

Van Albert—Oh, that's just a little scheme Bilkins has to increase his gas bill this month. His wife is coming back to-morrow and he told her he had been remaining at home and reading every night since she went away. If she looked at the gas bill and found it to be only 32 cents he would be cornered for an explanation.

LARGE DEMAND FOR CLOCKS.

While the clock industry of the Black Forest has held its place in the markets of Europe and America for over two centuries, the introduction of modern methods has given it so great an impulse that within six years France has more than doubled her import of Black Forest clocks, the Argentine Republic has tripled her imports, and the United States has more than quadrupled hers.

LONDON'S ODD STREET NAMES

Remarkable Appellations Designate Highways in the Great English Metropolis.

Houndsditch, the supposed re-christening of which is still being keenly debated, is a survival of a great number of old time London street names at least as objectionable.

It had formidable rivals in Crackbrain court, a passage in Rosemary lane, Whitechapel; in Deadman's place, which was near Dirty lane, in Southwark; and in Cutthroat lane, which was "Radcliffe way." Then there was Bandyleg alley, close to the Fleet Ditch; Rotherhithe and its Cuckhold's court. Of Frying Pan alleys there were at one time 17; Hangman's Gains was near the Tower; Smock alley rubbed shoulders with Hockley in the Hole, and Stickling lane was a malodorous neighbor of Newgate Market.

Among the other curious old world names, some of which may possibly still survive, were Gossips' Row, Gutter lane, Farthing alley, three of them, court and stairs, and Arthicoke, a name which occurred 11 times in Old London.

ONE AUTO ENOUGH FOR HIM.

Having been knocked off a load of hay by a collision with a passing automobile, Samuel Griner, a Ewing township farmer, refused to allow himself to be taken to a hospital in a new automobile ambulance with which the Trenton police department has recently been equipped. Griner's fall brought on a hemorrhage of the lungs, but when the auto ambulance arrived on the scene he refused to get into it, saying he had had enough experience with such pesky things and preferred to ride in a horse-drawn vehicle. He was accommodated.—Trenton Dispatch to Philadelphia Record.

SQUIRRELS FORETELL WEATHER.

John Linch of Oil City, Pa., has a pair of squirrels which he brought home from the Oklahoma oil fields a year or two ago, which he declares are infallible weather prophets. The other morning he went to feed the animals and they refused to be coaxed into the open. He notified his wife that there would be a storm later in the day and was ridiculed, as there were then no outward indications of any bad weather. The downpour which followed convinced the incredulous Mrs. Linch that the squirrels were real weather prophets.—Philadelphia Record.

The Stone of Infamy.

In many Italian cities there formerly existed what was called "pietra d'infamie," or a stone of infamy for the punishment of bankrupts. In Venice one stands near the Church of St. Mark, and in Verona and Florence they are near the old markets. On a day in carnival week the old time custom was to have all traders who had become bankrupt in the preceding twelve months led to the stone, and one by one each stood on its center to hear the reading of a report of his business failure and to endure the reproaches heaped on him by his creditors. At the end of a certain time each bankrupt was partly undressed, and three officers took hold of his shoulders and three others of his knees and, raising him as high as they could, bumped him on the stone deliberately twelve times, "in honor of the twelve apostles," the creditors crowing like cocks while the bumping proceeded.

Wigs and Trousers.

The wig went out and gave place to the natural hair, powered and pigtailed, as a result of the movement back to nature which accompanied and preceded the French revolution. But why did the wig come in? Some say that Louis XIII. started the fashion when he began to grow bald, the court imitating him out of a desire to please the monarch. Be that as it may, the wig "caught on" as few articles of costume have ever done, and those who have begun to despair of the masculine leg ever being emancipated from the trouser may find comfort in the fact that wigs prevailed for considerably more than a century in England, whereas trousers scarcely existed a hundred years ago, to say nothing of being the universal wear.—London News.

Mother Earth.

When Junius Brutus and the sons of Tarquin asked the famous Delphic oracle who was to succeed Superbus on the throne of Rome they received for an answer, "He who shall first kiss his mother." As the two princes were hastening home to fulfill what they thought was meant Brutus fell to the earth and cried out, "Thus do I kiss thee, O Earth, the mother of us all!" This is perhaps the earliest recorded instance of the use of the term "Mother Earth."—Exchange.

Diplomacy.

"I'm surprised at you."

"What's the matter now?"

"Why, your wife tells me you've invited the grocer and butcher to your party tonight!"

"Well, what of it?"

"Think of what you owe society."

"Yes, but think what I owe my grocer and butcher!"—Judge.

What Is the Spinster Age?

In the days of Jane Austen 22 or 23 was supposed to be a good-and-done-for age for a girl, who was expected to be married when she was 17 or 18 years of age. Nowadays a girl is said to be sensible who waits until she is 25 or 30 to marry and then, of course, marries a man very different from the hero of her salad days.

HER METHOD OF REASONING

Little One Used Sound Logic in Ascertaining Just How Old Mamma Was.

Little Frieda is a bright miss who comes to her conclusions on lines of what to her small mind seem strict and logical reasoning. So one shopping day, with more speculation in her eye than her mother noticed, she inquired, "What kind of a waist did you ask that lady for, mamma?"

"I asked her for a 38 waist," answered the mother.

When they got home, Frieda, with the air of a discoverer, pranced gaily up to her grandmother. "I've found out how old mamma is," she announced; "she's 38."

"How did you find it out?" queried the grandmother.

"Because she bought a 38 waist. She buys me ten-year-old dresses, so if she buys 38 waists for herself, she must be 38 years old," concluded Miss Frieda triumphantly.

"EQUINOCTIAL STORM."

A search of the weather records will reveal the fact that the day which marks the separation of the seasons and on which the sun "souths" exactly at noon is more likely than not to be clear and beautiful, but with the latitude that the amateur weather prophets of the past always allowed themselves for safety's sake, any storm occurring within several days before or after the time of equal day and night has been held to be either an early or a belated coming of the inevitable "line" storm. A very little thought on the area of the habited portions of the earth and the known causes of storms should convince those who are willing to be convinced that the "equinoctial" is a superstition and a myth.

TURKEY DOOMED.

A regenerated Turkey is going to take back all her old possessions including Herzegovina and Bosnia, so the Austrians would better come in out of the wet and give them up in time.

It is a splendid dream, worthy of a Turk of the days when the banner of the prophet swept to victory on a thousand fields of battle. But dead empires are not revivified. Disintegration, not conquest, is the doom of the land of the sultan.—N. Y. Press.

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